

**JOINT CITY COUNCIL AND DURHAM BOARD OF COUNTY  
COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2007 – 10:00 A.M.  
Committee Room – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor – City Hall**

Present: Mayor William V. Bell, Mayor Pro Tempore Cora Cole-McFadden and Council Members Farad Ali, Eugene Brown, Diane Catotti and Mike Woodard. Absent: Council Member Howard Clement, III.

Present: Chair Ellen Reckhow, Vice Chair Becky Heron and Commissioners Lewis Cheek and Michael Page. Absent: Commissioner Philip Cousin.

Staff in attendance: City Manager Patrick Baker, County Manager Mike Ruffin, City Attorney Henry Blinder, County Attorney Chuck Kitchen, Deputy City Manager Ted Voorhees, Deputy County Managers Wendell Davis and Carolyn Titus, Assistant County Manager Deborah Craig-Ray, City Clerk D. Ann Gray and Deputy County Clerk Yvonne Gordon.

**SUBJECT: GANG ASSESSMENT SURVEY REPORT**

Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden called the joint meeting to order and stated the purpose of the meeting is to receive the gang assessment survey report from the consultants.

Deputy City Manager Ted Voorhees stated in the summer of 2006, the Durham City Council and the Durham Board of County Commissioners sanctioned a Comprehensive Gang Assessment for Durham. The study was conducted by James C. (Buddy) Howell – a national gang expert – and Deborah Lamn Weisel, a researcher at N. C. State University. Contracted by the City of Durham Police Department, the study has been ongoing for the better part of 15 months.

He stated in light of some minor revisions, the final draft of the assessment was completed in November and the consultants are presenting its findings and recommendations. The City Council and the Board of Commissioners are requested to hear the merits of the assessment and direct staff to move forward with implementing the respective recommendations of the assessment.

Deputy City Manager Voorhees stated as a first step to implementing some of the suggested recommendations, management is recommending that Council and the Board of County Commissioners, in concept, direct staff to employ the three tier strategy of suppression, intervention and prevention as identified in the Comprehensive Gang Model.

In addition and more specifically; a project coordinator should be employed to spearhead the anti-gang effort; a steering committee should be appointed to oversee the

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implementation of the gang program; an intervention team should be established to develop procedures and protocol for addressing at risk gang involved youth; and, lastly an in-house assessment team should be appointed to work in concert with N. C. Central University to accommodate on-going assessments.

Deputy City Manager Voorhees introduced Deborah Lamn Weisel who referenced the following existing programs in Durham:

- GREAT programming
- GangNet
- Crime data indentifying gang involvement
- Dedicated gang prosecutor
- Graffiti abatement
- Model collaboration with the Criminal Justice Resource Center
- Federal \$1.25 million grant

Buddy Howell recognized former Police Chief Chalmers because the gang assessment was his ideal back in 2003.

Mr. Howell and Ms. Lamn presented the following top 10 recommendations:

1. Implement the Comprehensive Gang Model
  - Balance prevention, intervention, and suppression strategies
  - Use this gang assessment as a guide
  - Articulate and prioritize objectives
  - Window of opportunity to have a large impact in Durham

Key Action Steps:

- Bring the Anti-Gang Coordinator who has been selected on board
  - Define a gang, gang member, and gang crime
  - Form a Gang Steering Committee
  - Activate the Gang Intervention Team
  - Implement the Comprehensive Anti-Gang Initiative (\$1.25m.)
2. Provide gang education
    - Educate parents
    - Educate media
    - Educate the community
  3. Secondary Prevention: Increase referrals of the most troubled youth to services.
    - Primary target group should be school aged youth
  4. Establish a one-stop juvenile assessment center
    - Assessment services
    - Truancy drop-off site

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- Conduct comprehensive needs assessments for referrals with Outreach Worker follow-up
  - Treatment needs (Mental health; Substance abuse)
5. A new detention center & more court counselors are needed
- Need an Annie E. Casey Fdn. Study – The DC should be linked to the new assessment center
6. Refocus police gang unit
- Large unit (Currently 30 uniformed officers; assign two detectives; assign two investigators to DA's office)
  - Clarify goals of gang unit (Current activities are broad; network with SROS, juvenile detectives, patrol officers and others)
  - Gang officers are busy (Gang members arrested average of 6 times)
7. Adopt civil injunctions
- Improve public confidence
  - Target specific areas
  - Target specific behaviors
  - Target specific individuals and groups
  - Provide a tool for police
  - Use police resources more efficiently and effectively
  - Reduce crime
8. Threats of federal prosecution must be real
- Empty threats undermine public confidence in justice system
  - Empty threats also undermine offender confidence in the justice system
  - Build gang cohesion
  - Dampen police morale
9. Seek emergency assistance for prosecution
- Court delays crowd the jail (1% of inmates comprised 21% of detention days in 2005)
  - Affect pre-trial release decisions
  - Increase police workload
  - Reduce convictions
  - Undermine public confidence

Workload is worsening:

- Average aggravated assault disposition (303 days in Durham; 35% higher than the state average)
- Oldest cases (798 days to dispose of 90% of these cases; 45% above the state average)
- Murder filings increasing (Up 159% from 1999-00 to 2006-07; Contrasts with 5% statewide increase)

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10. Restore public confidence

- Address witness intimidation (Monitor courtrooms and waiting areas; educate judges, bailiffs; ban gang paraphernalia and known gang members)
- Expedite prosecution of serious crimes (Three major gang homicide cases this year; Average age 31 months)
- Only 26% of citizens in 2007 rated police as doing a good job

Members of the City Council and County Commissioners thanked the consultants for the report and recommendations.

Mayor Bell stated the consultants have presented a lot of recommendations and he would hope that when the managers come back before the council and commissioners with recommendations they would narrow the priorities to speak where focus should be initially and a recommendation on how the steering committee might be comprised.

Chair Reckhow referenced appendix three listing [short term strategies] that she felt would be useful for the managers to use as a starting point. Due to the difficulty at times scheduling a joint meeting of the two governing bodies, Chair Reckhow suggested using the Joint City/County Committee as somewhat as a steering committee - then the information being presented to the two governing bodies.

Commissioner Page referenced Council Member Ali's recommendation in making certain the community is included in the process.

**MOTION** by Council Member Catotti seconded by Council Member Brown that the Durham City Council and the Durham County Board of County Commissioners receive the Comprehensive Gang Assessment Report; and

That the City and County adopts in concept a three tier strategy of prevention, intervention and suppression as identified in the Comprehensive Gang Model; and

That the City and County Managers are directed to move forward with implementing the recommendations contained within the assessment report; and

That a project coordinator be expeditiously employed to spearhead the anti-gang effort; a Steering Committee be appointed to oversee the implementation of the gang program; and Intervention Team be established to develop procedures and protocol for addressing at-risk gang-involved youth; and an in-house Assessment Team be appointed to work in concert with North Carolina Central University to accommodate on-going assessments was approved at 12:08 p.m. by the following vote: Ayes: Mayor Bell, Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden and Council Members Ali, Brown, Catotti and Woodard. Noes: None. Absent: Council Member Clement.

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**MOTION** by Commissioner Cheek seconded by Commissioner Page that the Durham City Council and the Durham County Board of County Commissioners receive the Comprehensive Gang Assessment Report; and

That the City and County adopts in concept a three tier strategy of intervention, prevention and suppression as identified in the Comprehensive Gang Model; and

That the City and County Managers are directed to move forward with implementing the recommendations contained within the assessment report; and

That a project coordinator be expeditiously employed to spearhead the anti-gang effort; a Steering Committee be appointed to oversee the implementation of the gang program; and Intervention Team be established to develop procedures and protocol for addressing at-risk gang-involved youth; and an in-house Assessment Team be appointed to work in concert with North Carolina Central University to accommodate on-going assessments was approved at 12:08 p.m. by the following vote: Ayes: Chair Reckhow, Vice Chair Heron and Commissioners Cheek and Page. Noes: None. Absent: Commissioner Cousin.

There being no further business to come before the joint governing bodies, the meeting was adjourned at 12:08 p.m.

D. Ann Gray, CMC  
City Clerk